

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 191152
ORIGIN AF-10

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 191152

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, ET

SUBJECT: PMGSE INTENTION TO ARREST EMBASSY LOCALS

REF: A. ADDIS ABABA 3158; B. ADDIS ABABA 3179

1. YOU HAVE ASKED FOR GUIDANCE ON ERITREAN ETHIOPIAN
CITIZENS IN THE EVENT THAT PMGSE SEEKS TO ARREST THEM.
AS YOU KNOW FROM 2 FAM 228.3, YOU HAVE AUTHORITY TO GRANT
TEMPORARY REFUGE FOR HUMANITARIAN REASONS IN CASE OF
EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE THE SAFETY OF A PERSON
IS JEOPARDIZED. IN A SITUATION SUCH AS THIS WHERE THERE
IS FEAR OF IMMINENT ARREST, YOU MAY GRANT TEMPORARY
REFUGE, IF YOUR JUDGMENT IS THAT THERE IS IMMEDIATE DANGER.
HOWEVER, IT IS NOT, REPEAT NOT, USG POLICY TO GRANT
DIPLOMATIC ASYLUM IN CASES WHERE THE REQUEST IS MADE
WITHIN A FOREIGN JURISDICTION. THEREFORE, IT IS IMPORTANT

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 191152

THAT, BEFORE YOU GRANT TEMPORARY REFUGE, YOU CLEARLY INFORM
PETITIONERS OF THE TEMPORARY NATURE OF THE REFUGE. IF THE
ERITREANS SEEK REFUGE IN SPITE OF ITS LIMITED SCOPE, YOU
SHOULD IMMEDIATELY REPORT TO THE DEPARTMENT AND SEEK
INSTRUCTIONS FOR FURTHER ACTION. THAT ACTION WOULD INCLUDE
NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE PMGSE TO TRY TO ENSURE FAIR TREAT-
MENT. YOU SHOULD ALSO OBTAIN INFORMATION REQUIRED IN

2 FAM 228.5 AND TRANSMIT IT TO THE DEPARTMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER GRANTING TEMPORARY REFUGE.

2. YOU MAY NOT BELIEVE THAT A DEMARCHE IS NECESSARY BEYOND DISCUSSIONS THAT MEMBERS OF YOUR MISSION HAVE ALREADY HAD WITH PMGSE OFFICIALS. DEPARTMENT HAD, HOWEVER, PREPARED TALKING POINTS FOR POSSIBLE USE BY DCM OR OTHER EMBOFF IN CONVERSATION WITH BERHANE DERESSA OR OTHER APPROPRIATE OFFICIAL. WE LEAVE TO YOUR JUDGMENT WHAT USE, IF ANY, YOU MAKE OF FOLLOWING POINTS:

-- USG IS CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC THAT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES IS IMPROVING.

-- USG IN PARTICULAR APPRECIATED JULY 4 MESSAGE FROM CHAIRMAN MENGISTU AND PROMPT SCHEDULING OF PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS CEREMONY.

-- AS BOTH GOVERNMENTS ARE NOW TRYING IN THIS NEW SPIRIT OF COOPERATION TO VERIFY TROUBLESOME RUMORS BEFORE RE-ACTING, PUBLICLY OR OTHERWISE, I WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS THE STATUS OF OUR ETHIOPIAN EMPLOYEES.

-- EMBASSY HAS HEARD RECENTLY THAT PUBLIC SECURITY ORGANS HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO ARREST ERITREANS IN ADDIS ABABA WHO HAVE BEEN UNDER SUSPICION OR SURVEILLANCE. IN PARTICULAR, WE HAVE HEARD THAT SOME OF OUR ETHIOPIAN EMPLOYEES WHO
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 191152

ARE FROM ERITREA ARE UNDER SUSPICION.

-- CERTAINLY, OUR LOCAL EMPLOYEES CONTINUE TO HAVE RESPONSIBILITIES AS ETHIOPIAN CITIZENS AND WE WOULD WANT IT NO, RPT NO OTHER WAY. WE DO NOT QUESTION YOUR JURISDICTION OVER THEM IF THEY HAVE BROKEN SOME ETHIOPIAN LAWS. HOWEVER, IT WOULD BE MOST UNFORTUNATE FOR OUR IMPROVING RELATIONSHIP IF ANY OF OUR ERITREAN EMPLOYEES - WHO HAVE GIVEN US LONG AND FAITHFUL SERVICE - WERE TO BE PLACED UNDER SUSPICION OR DETAINED MERELY BECAUSE THEY ARE EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. EMBASSY OR MERELY BECAUSE THEY WERE ERITREANS, OR BOTH.

-- AS AMBASSADOR CHAPIN TOLD PERMSEC DAWIT ON JULY 20, MEMBERS OF OUR EMBASSY STAFF - AMERICAN AND ETHIOPIAN - HAVE ALWAYS BEEN TREATED WELL AND BEEN ALLOWED TO FUNCTION WITHOUT TROUBLE REGARDLESS OF THE STATE OF OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS. WE HAVE APPRECIATED THIS AND TRUST THAT OUR STAFF WILL NOT ENCOUNTER ANY TROUBLE IN THE FUTURE.

-- WE HOPE THAT THERE IS NOTHING TO THE RUMORS BUT TRUST THAT YOU WILL REPORT OUR CONCERN TO THE PROPER AUTHORITIES.

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